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DCS LAUNCHES ONLINE BACKGROUND CHECK PORTAL

INDIANAPOLIS (May 31, 2018) — The Indiana Department of Child Services has digitized its background check process, significantly reducing turnaround time.

The new online portal – used to screen applicants including teachers, volunteers and others seeking to work with children – launches June 4. The portal replaces pen-and-paper submission procedures and is expected to ultimately decrease average processing time from 21 days to 10.

“Reduced wait time is paramount to helping potential employers make sound decisions about applicants who want to work with youth,” said Andria Hoying, DCS deputy director of placement support and compliance, which oversees the Central Office Background Unit. “Moving the system online helps us evaluate history in a more timely fashion in order to assure the safety of children.”

“Organizations of all types make requests to DCS to verify child protective histories,” added Cindy Hewett, DCS background check program manager, noting the COBCU completed almost 100,000 forms in 2017.

The online portal connects requesting agencies directly with their applicants. The agency enters basic identifying information into the system, triggering the portal to notify the applicant by email a request has been made. The applicant then logs into the system and enters additional information, which is utilized by the COBCU to complete a thorough records search.

Each background check consists of four steps: applicants are fingerprinted, and applicant information is cross-referenced with local law enforcement history, sex offender records and previous DCS cases alleging abuse or neglect of a child. (Fingerprints are not routed through the portal.)

The background check unit spent the last week of May finalizing remaining paper applications in preparation for a full transition to the online portal June 4.

*About **Indiana DCS**: The Indiana Department of Child Services protects children from abuse and neglect and works to ensure their financial support. Indiana Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline: 800.800.5556. Child Support Customer Service Kidsline: 800.840.8757 or 317.233.5437. www.in.gov/dcs*

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